The Heart of Chestnut Hill

presents our vision of

The Road Ahead

Plan on a Page

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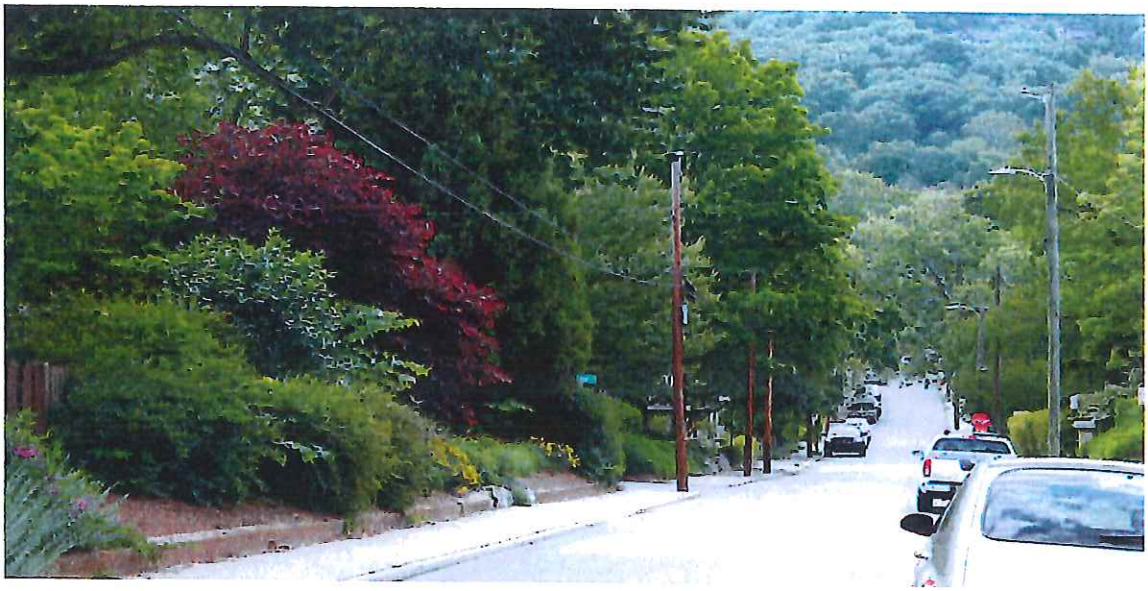


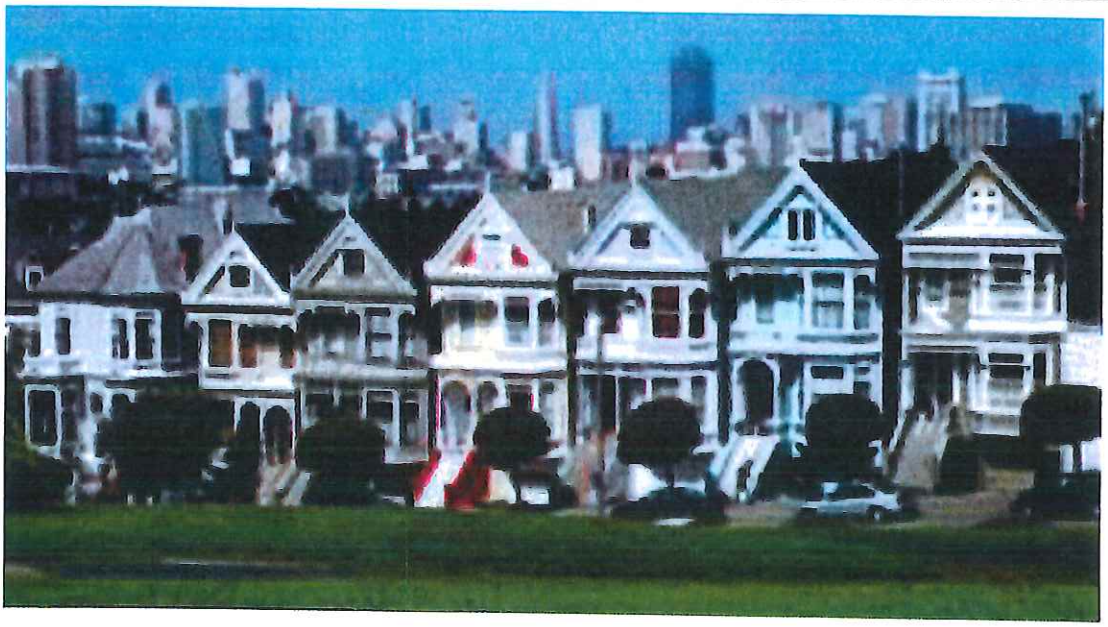
The Heart of Chestnut Hill

Brief Neighborhood History

I grew up here. My hood is a little bit of something that lies between Charlotte St (east), Washington Rd (west), E Chestnut St (south) and Hillside St (north). My house is on Madison Ave- facing Beaucatcher/Sunset Mountains.

This little micro was built between 1900 and 1923, mostly in a area known as Hillside Development. I think the folks who lived here were mostly working class people, renters. I heard recently on a PBS program, that individual home ownership, the American Dream, did not actually become a reality until after World War II and even then not for Black people, as the FHA would not grant a mortgage to even a Black soldier returning from the war. That being said, I do not know what was going on in this place, but my dad bought this house in 1940 from the Shuford family and he was not the first Black home owner on the block. From 1938 to 1958, this little hood became Asheville's "***Striver's Row***."

If I start at the corner of E. Chestnut and walk north on Madison Ave, I pass three lovely little bungalows (see below) that remind me of the row of "vickies" on Steiner Street in San Francisco.



One was the home of Asheville's very first Black policeman , Lehman Williams...across the street from a really good place to buy your liquor! Keep going north and you pass the home of Mrs. Lucy Herring, a well known educator. Cross again and you pass the home of Rev Percy, who left to become Dean of Chapel at Tuskegee Institute. Now you are next door to Asheville's second police officer, Harold Fields, and his son who went on to integrate the law school in Florida and become a major judge in Miami.

If you cross the street now, you are at Shirley Cannon's house, listening to her playing piano with her best friend, Nina Simome.

Cross again and you are at the McKissicks, whose son Floyd, along with three others, integrated the UNC School of Law and went on to take over CORE ,the Congress of Racial Equality, making him one of the leading civil rights leaders in this country. This is also the family that gave us a current state senator (also a Floyd) and first group of Black millionaires (remember Soul City?).

Cross again and you get my house. Dad, John Brooks Dendy, was the Black golf champion in the 1930's and a member of the Western North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame. Next to us was the home of Dr and Mrs. Frank Toliver, who was the principal of Stephens Lee High School. He left here to become the head of the entire Black school system for North Carolina. Mr. Belton, the next and last principal of Stephens Lee moved in when the Tolivers left.

Across from the Toliver's was Mrs. Vance, who ran a boarding house for Black baseball players. Her guests included Jackie Robinson and ***(Hey...Dodger fans...come see where Campy slept!)*** ...Roy Campanella!

Keep going down the block and you get the Harris' s, who owned the YMI Drug Store, a major black owned business and Dr. White, our only Black doctor, for a while. And that's just on this end of Madison. *Wow! Where are the historic plaques??*

I am not going to leave me out....youngest member of the National Honor Society, one of six Black students to integrate the undergraduate school at Vanderbilt University, first woman in my MOS in the US Army and first woman to be awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr Fellowship for Leadership from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation for graduate study.

I can remember one really hot August day, sitting on the porch, listening to Shirley and Nina playing a jazz riff...Mom came in with her high C soprano, turning the rift to opera (Mom had pipes...she had won a scholarship to Julliard in the 1930's), then Marion Anderson, who was visiting the Toliver's put in her two cents and blew the teenagers out of the water! Poor Nina and Shirley! Loved it!!!

Urban renewal hit this little hood hard. The City just decided to kill it...I think in the name of "affordable housing"? City moved a lot of folks in, who did not share the Striver's Row values and the place really fell down. Sad. Then it seemed like all of the halfway houses full of troubled souls from Charlotte and the coast took over the place. (There are no rules about how many of these you can operate in a little hood???)

The Strivers left or just died.

Now we seem to be going through rebirth....new families moving in. Race has changed...the folks are mostly white, but at least appreciate what a nice community a little hood can be. We talk over our fences. We yell at each other from our porches. We care about each other....and we are on Facebook!

Neighborhood Vision

I am use to doing strategic plans for nonprofits and have worked on some pretty important ones in the San Francisco Bay Area. I see the Asheville's Comprehensive Plan much like important strategic plans I participated in. That being said...in 10 years...here is what we want – ***hands off!***

In 10 years, we want to ***still be*** –

- hollering across the porches and yards at Laura and Trip...
- standing in the street, catching up with Jersey or Dave...
- throwing parties to save a stranded Jamaican band...
- caring about Ms Maggie...
- knowing most people's dogs, cats, kids and troubles...
- borrowing rakes and ladders...
- watching nuts sledding down Broad St on snowy days.

We expect in 10 years to be every bit the neighborhood we were and are!!!

Residents in the Heart of Chestnut Hill are fearful of the possible changes to existing zoning ordinances being considered by the city. Currently, our micro hood is one of two communities which meets the density requirement.

An increase in density requirements will forever change the community and ultimately destroy this historic area.

Currently there is limited parking on our narrow street. There have been times when fire and ambulances have had to back out. Not to mention the City garbage trucks trying to navigate the area. Adding additional housing and not requiring builders to provide off street parking will make an already dangerous situation worse.

We believe the Heart of Chestnut Hill still maintains the bungalow culture and sense of community which modern day Asheville was built upon. Asheville is evolving, but as a city we must be very cognizant to ensure we don't destroy the foundation which has brought the city to its current state.

Communities, like the Heart of Chestnut Hill, are the foundation of what made Asheville great, and once we start to chip away at the individual community structure, we start to lose our identity all together. We were provided a valuable lesson in the 1970's when nonresidential offices began to creep their way into Charlotte NC's central neighborhoods. As this expansion continued, many of the historic homes and buildings in the area were demolished in the name of "renewal" and many of the people who once frequented to streets of this community were nowhere to be found. The 4th Ward in Charlotte, NC was almost completely lost in the 1970's, had it not been for a brave few who fought to preserve what remained of the historic area.
The lesson we should take from this is once the tide turns in favor of commercialism invading our neighborhoods, it's could take decades of work to reverse and in reality much of the charm is lost forever. We offer the same collection of quaint, charming and urban contemporary *residential* experience that they do.

Neighborhood Strengths

1. We are a community of people.
2. We are centrally located on bus lines and can walk to most services, including downtown.
3. We and 5 Points are the only two neighborhoods that currently meet Asheville's density requirements.
4. We are a neighborhood that embodies smart growth concepts.

Neighborhood Challenges

1. Because of increased development on Merrimon Avenue and Charlotte St. we are experiencing increased traffic on E. Chestnut, Hillside, Broad St and Madison Ave.
2. There is a need for local government to provide access to some type of low cost financing for low income residents, who already own homes, to be able make loans to do necessary repairs to preserve the housing stock. These loans could be based on similar criteria as reverse mortgages. They could maybe even be forgivable over time.
3. On our streets, we expect to need residential parking zoning as it is rolled out throughout the city.
4. Having a "lending library" for tools might be a great idea for all the diyers.
5. We would like a community garden space.

Neighborhood Responsibility

We are going to work on getting a neighborhood garden going. Additionally, we will look for ways to support the new tool lending library on Church St.

Alignment with Council Goals

1. We are currently working with the DOT and the City Economic Development Department on a project to add lighting and mural art to the underpass on Central Avenue. We wish to make this unsafe and uninviting area a well lit and inviting portal to our neighborhoods.
2. See Note 2 above. We support this as a way to retain homeowners who are minority, elderly, disabled and low income.
3. We would love some open space for a mini park or small garden. Currently there is none, unless the City would consider purchasing a lot and designating it as such?
4. New housing is being built green and some of the older houses are being fitted with solar panels. More of this could be done with low cost financing being made available...see note 2 above.
5. We have an active and connected neighborhood group with a facebook page and participation on Nextdoor.com.

Currently in the Hood....

Affordable 7-unit condominium with off-street parking

Older home with solar panels installed

Example of modern house green-built respecting neighborhood architecture. Includes in-law suite in rear and over the garage and off-street parking.

N 64. 109 Central Ave. (ca. 1925) Gable-on frame bungalow.

C 65. 111 Central Ave. (ca. 1905) Dormered grand-bungalow form house, yet older than typical bungalow. Pebbledash with some stick framing. Jettied gables. Shingled dormers.

I 66. ---Central Ave. (mid-20th c.) Small concrete block garage or warehouse. Fortunately practically obscured by vegetation.

Madison Avenue

C 67. 10 Madison Ave. (ca. 1925) Shingled one-story frame house with projecting bungalow-like gable.

C 68. 11 Madison Ave. (ca. 1920) Story-and-half gabled frame house. Aluminum siding.

C 69. 12 Madison Ave. (ca. 1925) Shingled gable-on bungalow.

C 70. 15 Madison Ave. (ca. 1920) Story-and-half gable-on house with shingled gables and flaring eaves.

C 71. 16 Madison Ave. (ca. 1925) Shingled gable-on bungalow.

Orchard Place

C 72. 3, 4, 5, 6 Orchard Place (ca. 1925) Grouping of four small gable-on bungalows. 3 and 4 display German siding, 5 and 6 have received asbestos shingles.

Charlotte Street

(north from Arlington Street intersection)

C 73. 59 Charlotte St. (ca. 1906) Two-and-half story weatherboarded frame structure with intersecting gable roofs and interior chimneys. 2/2 sash in paired windows. Converted to commercial usage with brick and tile storefront.

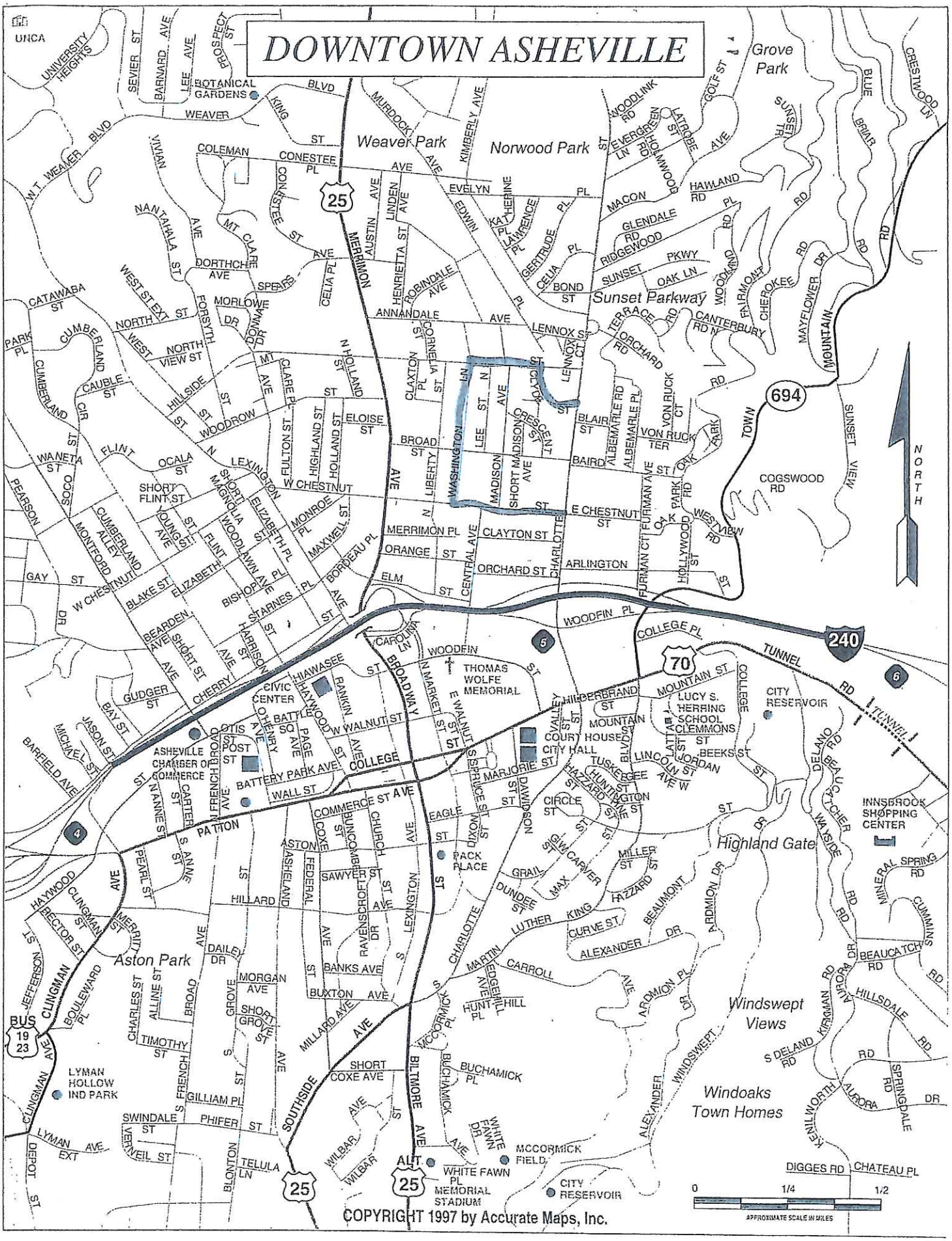
C 74. 65 Charlotte St. (ca. 1915) Shingle over weatherboard two-story box with central gable, one-story shed porch.

(Clayton Street intersection)

C 75. 88-92-94 Charlotte St. King James Apartments. (ca. 1920) Three-story multi-function structure with brushed brick facade. Three plate glass storefronts on Charlotte St., tiled pent roof beneath parapet.

P 76. 95 Charlotte St. Thomas Patton House. (1869) Originally a two-story house formally organized around central and transverse hallways, has grown into a highly informal mass due to numerous additions to the south and east. Five-bay facade features a central octagon bay or dormer (likely late 19th c.) over a one-story porch on boxed columns. The entrance surround, with broad sidelights and blinded transom, appears a late-19th-century alteration. The building's most striking exterior detail is its fanciful bargeboards, cut out in a chevron-like lattice. Original sash are 6/6. Brick chimneys are interior. The building's interior woodwork is quite good for 1869 Asheville. Hand-planed four-panel doors are set in robust retardataire three-past surrounds. The entrance hall has molded vertical wainscotting and a broad chair rail. A plain open-stringer stairway with turned newel post

Heart of Chestnut Hills



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Marian Anderson To Sing Here Tonight In Civic Music Concert

Marian Anderson, internationally-known negro contralto, will open the winter series of programs under the sponsorship of the Asheville Civic Music association with a concert at 8:30 o'clock tonight at the city auditorium.

The singer, who arrived in the city yesterday morning by plane from Raleigh, made appearances at Stephens-Lee negro high school and at the Phyllis Wheatley branch of the Y. W. C. A. yesterday. She is visiting with Rachel Battle, principal of Livingston street negro school, at 72 Madison avenue.

Marian Anderson, who is a native of Philadelphia received her early training through assistance by members of the Peoples' Choral society of Philadelphia. Upon graduation from Southern high school she studied under Giuseppe Boghetti and later abroad. In 1925, she was the winner of a vocal competition under the sponsorship of the Stadium Concerts of New York. She has toured Europe and America. Last March, she was given the Bok award which is presented annually to the person doing the most good for the city of Philadelphia during the past year.

Her program for the concert tonight will be as follows: "Bugrussing" and "So wie die Taub," Handel; "Agnus Dei," Bizet; "Fragment aus dem Aeschylus" "Der Tod und das Madchen," "Auf dem Wasser zu singen," and "Ave Maria," Schubert; aria, "Pleurez mes yeux," from the opera, "Le Cid" Massenet; "Songs My Mother Taught Me," Dvorak; "Christ Is Risen," Rachmanmoff; "O Mistress Mine" and "Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind," Quilter, and a group of negro folk songs, "Go Down Moses," arranged by Harry Burleigh, "Let Us Break Bread Together" arranged by William Lawrence; "Trumping," arranged by Edward Boatner, and "Honor, Honor" arranged by Johnson.

an appearance in the Civic opera which he had endowed recently.

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